(c) whether the contractors are siphoning off huge funds and not completing the task as per schedule;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the corrective steps Government proposes to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL): (a) The Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (Report No. 13 of 2006), which is based on test check of records for the period from 2000-2005, has been received in the Ministry. In the report, some instances of diversion of funds, non-compliance of tendering process and unreliable monitoring in the implementation of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) has been mentioned.

(b) Some instances of diversion of funds have been reported in respect of the implementation of PMGSY in Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Nagaland, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand and West Bengal, non-compliance of tendering process in Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal and unreliable monitoring in Andhra Pradesh, Meghalaya, Punjab, Rajasthan and West Bengal.

(c) No such instance has come to notice.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The corrective steps taken by the Government in this regard are as under:-

(i) Andhra Pradesh Arunachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu have been advised to fix responsibility for using PMGSY 'funds for activities not permitted as per the Programme Guidelines.

(ii) The fund flow/utilization is being regularly monitored.

(iii) The States' have been advised to strictly follow the provisions of the Standard Bidding Process.

(iv) The States have been advised to strengthen the quality control mechanism.

(v) The implementation of the programme is being regularly reviewed/monitored.

Irregularities pointed by CAG on NREGS

†1847. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has pointed out many irregularities regarding the funds of "poverty eradication programme" and "National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme" and has given its recommendations in this regard; and

(b) whether Government would take concrete action on the recommendations made by CAG so that such irregularities can be avoided in future?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU): (a) On a request made by the Ministry of Rural Development, C and AG conducted performance audit of the implementation of NREGA in 26 States covering 68 district for the period from February, 2006 to March, 2007. Final audit report of C and AG has been laid on the Table of the House on 24.10.2008.

Findings of CAG as given in its final report relate mainly to issues such as application for employment, issue of dated receipts, job card formats, muster rolls, maintenance of record registers, delayed payment of wages, lack of an effective grievance redressal system, inspection of works, monitoring and shortage of staff with the implementing agencies, expenditure on non-permissible activities/ineligible persons/agencies and incorrect accounting of expenditure.

(b) CAG report has been shared with the States. At Central level, the Ministry has taken the following steps to avoid recurrence of such irregularities in the implementation of NREGA.

(i) Generating Awareness

Various steps have been taken to generate awareness about NREGA. Gram Sabhas and one day orientation of all Sarpanches at the Block level have been held. Local vernacular newspapers, radio, TV, films and cultural forms are being used for the purpose. Leaflets and brochures in local language are being provided. Village camps have been organized by the District teams and NGOs and Self help Groups are being associated in the awareness generation.

(ii) Staffing/Training

Capacity building for rural development functionaries and Panchayati Raj functionaries is an essential pre-requisite for better implementation of rural development programmes. NREGA guidelines provide that a dedicated Gram Rojgar Sahayak (GRS) should be appointed in each Gram Panchayat and a dedicated Programme officer should be appointed at Block level for NREGA works besides other technical and non-technical staff. So far 1.92 lakh GRS and 5454 Programme Officers have been recruited. Besides, 23196 technical staff, 6924 Data Entry Operators (DEA) and 5401 Accountants have also been appointed under NREGA. As regards training, 7.19 lakh Panchayati Raj functionaries, 1.64 lakh GRS, 19687 technical staff, 6068 DEAs, 5170 Accountants and 6.17 lakh Members of Vigilance and Monitoring Committees (VMC) have been trained under NREGA.

(iii) People's Participation

(a) Village level monitoring committees have been set up and trained.

(b) Non Governmental Organisations are being involved for awareness generation under NREGA. The Government of India has introduced awards to be known as Rozgar Jagrookta Puraskar (Employment awareness awards) to recognize the

outstanding contribution by the civil society organisations for promoting effective implementation of NREGA in different states of the country.

(c) Gram Sabhas are held.

(iv) Vigilance and Monitoring

Implementation of NREG Act is monitored on regular basis. Vigilance and Monitoring Committees have been set up at State as well as district levels. Local MPs are the members of the district Vigilance and Monitoring Committees. Village level Vigilance and Monitoring Committees have also been set up for local monitoring. Members of the Central Employment Guarantee Council undertake field visits to various districts. National level Monitors (NLMs) and Area Officers visit various districts to oversee the progress of the Act. Performance of NREGA is reviewed periodically by Minister (RD) and Secretary (RD) during fortnightly meetings, Performance Review Committee meetings and State specific review meetings.

(v) Transparency

(a) States have been requested to make payment of wages to NREGA workers through their accounts in Post Offices/Banks. So far 4.92 crore Post Office/bank accounts of NREGA workers have been opened.

(b) States have been directed to conduct social audit of each and every work of NREGA within three months. Members of the Central Employment Guarantee Council are actively participating in the Social audit. Social Audit has been done in 1.5 lakh Gram Panchayats.

(c) A comprehensive Web-based MIS ***www.nrega.nic.in*** has been implemented which places all data in public domain. States have been asked to put all Muster Rolls (MR) on the web site of NREGA and make on-line reporting of the MRs verified and works inspected at block and district level. So far, 95.49 lakh MRs have been verified, 2.29 lakh works have been inspected at district level and 14.07 lakh works have been inspected at block level.

(d) A Citizen Information Board has been introduced. This board is to be displayed at all prominent places. This will enable the local community to know the works being undertaken under NREGA and would also facilitate the process of spreading awareness about the programme.

(vi) Grievance redressal mechanism

A grievance redressal mechanism has been set up. A helpline has also been established and made operational in the Ministry to address the public complaints/ grievances and to provide general information about NREGA. States have also been advised to put up their helplines.